

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully considering the present application. Please reconsider the present application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1-6 were pending in the present application. Claim 1 has been canceled. Claims 7-9 have been added. Thus, claims 2-9 are now pending in the present application. Claims 2-5 are independent, while claims 6-9 depend respectively from claims 2-5.

Amendments to the Claims

Claims 2-6 have been amended by way of this reply. Claim 2-5 have been rewritten into independent form. Claim 6 has been amended to remove its multiple dependency. New claims 7-9 have been added according to the removal of the multiple dependency from claim 6. No new matter has been added by way of the amendments.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 2-6 contain allowable subject matter. Claim 1 has been canceled. Claims 2-5 have been rewritten into independent form, and now stand allowable. Claims 6-9 depend from allowable claims 2-5. Thus, claims 6-9 also now stand allowable, for at least the same reasons as claims 2-5.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 1 of the present application was rejected under U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent Application No. 2004-111353 ("Karantaru"). Claim 1 has canceled. Thus, this rejection is now moot.

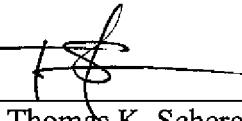
Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places the present application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591, Reference 15115/179001 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: June 30, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

By


Thomas K. Scherer
Registration No.: 45,079
OSHA · LIANG LLP
1221 McKinney St., Suite 2800
Houston, Texas 77010
(713) 228-8600
(713) 228-8778 (Fax)
Attorney for Applicant